

AMHERST LA PAZ CENTRO SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

Minutes

June 3rd, 2010

PRESENT: Liz Etheridge, Chuck and Nancy Milch, Kathy Mullin, Mary Santiago, Anne Stanek, Carol Wood.

We welcomed Carol Wood, who attended our meeting for the first time. She is interested in coming as often as her schedule permits. We're happy to have her come any time that she is able.

REPORT FROM JULIO

The bank situation has finally been cleared and Julio can now have access to the account. Kathy's explanation of the problem that occurred is that upon Ariel's death, another co-signer needed to be appointed. However, as in the US, there was a form of the Patriot Act introduced in Nicaragua also, so everyone's backgrounds needed to be checked – both individuals and that of the Fundacion there – which all took many months, before a new co-signer could be approved.

Meanwhile, the land we were hoping to buy for the \$3000 that was locked in the account has now been sold to another party. This was a disappointment.

MISSION STATEMENT

We amended the Mission Statement to read as follows:

The mission of the Amherst/La Paz Centro Sister City Committee is to sustain and enhance the existing partnership between Amherst, Ma, USA and La Paz Centro, Nicaragua by encouraging cultural exchanges, community development and providing educational opportunities, all based on mutual respect and collaboration.

We unanimously approved this as our final statement.

SUGGESTIONS/QUESTIONS FOR MARY AND LIZ'S TRIP (July 1st – 8th)

1. Visit the Clinic, Casa de Mujer and Hospitalita
 - a. Try to find out if there are any health/sex education programs in the community sponsored by any of these medical establishments

- b. What medical/epidemiological areas might be of particular interest that possible medical students from Springfield could tap into?
2. Banking
 - a. Kathy will write out of list of expenses for which Julio needs to send receipts.
 - b. Julio should be prepared to submit receipts for delegation business also: materials that are bought, bus cost, hotel expenses, etc.
3. Education/Scholarship Students
 - a. Take pictures of the current students and match names with pictures, along with ages and grade level.
 - b. Meet with the principal of Pablo Sexto School to find out how the students are doing and whether there is a possibility that delegation youth could shadow students for an afternoon of classes next February.
 - c. Check with Lihia as to the tutoring or whatever she is doing with the students. Record the specifics of what she has been doing?
4. Meet with the La Paz Centro Committee
 - a. Who is on the committee?
 - b. How does each person feel about the status quo?
 - c. Gather others who might be interested in joining the committee, if possible.
5. Electricity problems
 - a. How much is the community center being used and for what purposes?
 - b. Try to find out if everyone is experiencing dramatic increases in electric bills or if it is just the community center?
6. Delegation Plans
 - a. Perform a tree census of the last delegation's plantings and take some pictures.
 - b. 2011 Project Possibilities
 - i. More tree planting?
 - ii. Fixing the cement on the pavilion?
 - iii. Painting
 - iv. Landscaping?
 - v. Making a cement path between the community center and the pavilion?
 - vi. Medical clinic?
 - c. Get a list of potential host families? Perhaps visit new possibilities?
 - d. Transportation: Make sure that we can get one big bus – check into Granada possibility (**Anne** will do this).
 - e. Is it possible to visit the geothermal plant?
 - f. Take a potential schedule for the delegation week to present to Julio (**Anne and Liz** will prepare this).
 - g. Visit preschool, library, clinic to find out what materials they might need that we could bring them.
 - h. Connect with the Germans and find out if there is a Peace Corps volunteer in the area.

- i. Bring gifts for the committee and the scholarship students. **Liz** will call the One Way Silk Screen Design Business to find out about the cost of T Shirts for the committee members and she will pursue the possibility of pencils (for the students) stamped with "Amherst" at Hastings.

Mary will find out from Julio:

1. If they would like computers
2. How many members there are on the Comite for gift purposes.

COFFEE SALES

The Town Meeting was once again quite short so the proceeds from coffee sales were just \$291 this session.

TAG SALE

The annual fundraising tag sale will be held on Saturday, September 11th on the North Common. **Anne** will put a notice in the First Church Register and web bulletin asking for furniture donations. There have already been several items donated which are very nice pieces and we may try to sell ahead of time on EBay.

The **next meeting** will be held on **Thursday, July 29th** in the **Lower Internal Meeting Room of the Bangs Center**.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Stanek
Chair